



## ***“Walking in Submission to Christ-Part 2”***

**Sermon Date: April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**

### **Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon**

*Below is a reference to the section of the New City Catechism that we went over on Sunday:*

#### **The New City Catechism—Lord’s Day 14**

#### **Did God Create Us Unable to Keep His Law?**

No, but because of the disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, all of creation is fallen; we are all born in sin and guilt, corrupt in our nature and unable to keep God’s law.

### **Prayer**

Praise God who instituted marriage to display the loving union between Christ and His bride. Praise Jesus whose love, pursuit, provision, and preservation of His bride is without reserve and independent of our faithfulness. Praise the Spirit who brings about new life in our hearts, working loving leadership into the heart of husbands and willing submission into the heart of wives. As you pray, consider making this prayer your own (this prayer was taken from Everyday Prayers by Scotty Smith).

*Lord Jesus, I’m greatly saddened about the growing number of my friends who are disconnected, despairing, or dying in their marriages. I’m saddened, but not shocked, for two reasons. It makes complete sense that the powers of darkness would assault the one relationship meant to tell the story of your great love for your bride. Of course marriage is going to be a war zone—the front lines of spiritual warfare until the day you return. Satan hates you, he hates the gospel, and therefore he hates your bride and he hates marriage. But knowing my own heart also decreases the shock factor. Like most of us, I came into marriage with little gospel and big naivete. I had no clue about the depths of my brokenness, the degree of my selfishness, or the devices of my sinfulness. I had no clue about what it would take to love one person well the rest of my life—a person who needs the gospel just as much as I do. And I certainly had no clue that your love alone is better than life; that your love alone can slake the deepest thirst of my heart; that your love alone can provide the depths of intimacy I crave and for which I’ve been made; that your love alone can free me to love another sinful spouse the way you love me as your spouse. Jesus, I pray for my friends, and I pray for myself. Protect us from the evil one and rescue us from ourselves. Amen.*

## **Scripture**

### ***Ephesians 5:25-33 (ESV)***

*<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

## **Handling the Word**

Let's break down the passage:

1. What motivation and example do believing husbands have for loving their wives (v. 25)?
2. Why did Christ give himself up for His bride (vv. 26-27)?
3. How should the believing husband's treatment of himself shape the way he loves his wife and point to Christ's treatment of His body (vv. 28-30)?
4. What was marriage intended to foreshadow (vv. 31-32)?
5. To reiterate, what is the responsibility of the believing husband and believing wife?

## **Understanding and Applying**

1. Rather than conditional, domineering, or passive, in your own words what type of headship or authority over their wives is the Spirit working in the hearts of believing husbands (vv. 25-33)? Be detailed in your response. Given your response, how does this challenge your headship over your wife or direct how you are to encourage husbands in their headship?
  
2. We read that Jesus ‘gave himself up’ for His bride that He might cleanse her of sin, make her new, and ultimately, perfect her (vv. 25-27). In your own words, how does Jesus’ sacrificial service—His life, death, resurrection, and daily intercession—on your behalf secure your justification, sanctification, and glorification (Romans 4:25, 6:10-11, 8:30; Ephesians 1:7, 13-14, 2:10)? As you consider the comprehensiveness of Jesus’ sacrificial love for you, what comes to your heart and mind?
  
3. To help us understand the husband’s role in giving himself up for his wife, John Stott says that Jesus “sacrificed Himself to serve her (the church), in order that she might become everything he longs for her to be, namely herself in the fullness of her glory.” How should John Stott’s words shape the priorities of a husband and the expectations of a wife? Husbands, how has the Spirit been working this desire in you, or more tangibly, how is your life—attention, time, ambitions, words, actions—leading your wife to *see* Jesus and hopefully, *flourish* in Him?
  
4. Walking in the Spirit, husbands give expression to how Christ loves His church as they love their wives like their own body—providing for, nourishing, cherishing, and comforting their wife (vv. 28-30). What do you think are some implications of the reality that if we are in Christ then we are members of His body—one with Him (Ephesians 2:5-7, 13-16, 5:29-30)? The words ‘nourish and cherish’ (v. 29) allude to much more than financial provision or security, what might it look like for a husband to nourish and cherish his wife as Christ does the church?

5. Leaving his father and mother, a man holds fast to his wife and the two become one flesh (v. 31). The husband and wife do not enter a partnership but rather a union. What is the difference between a partnership and a union? Based on your answer, how should this distinction impact the way believing husbands are to view their wife and marriage?
6. As alluded to in the two previous questions, Christ has established a covenant with His people and thus has joined them to Himself—a union (vv. 31-32). Why are you thankful that your relationship with Jesus is best expressed as a union rather than a partnership (Romans 8:37-39)? How does a marriage that overcomes the weaknesses and sins of spouses give expression to Jesus' commitment to His bride, the church?
7. In summary, Paul calls husbands to love their wives as themselves and wives to respect their husbands (v. 33). As you consider the nature of man and these two commands that give expression to the love of Christ towards His people, why are these commands *impossible* apart from the work of the Spirit in our hearts (Galatians 5:19-24)? How does the necessity of the Spirit's work in our lives keep us humble before God, even when we make progress in obedience?
8. Praise Jesus who loved His bride and gave Himself up for her that she might be sanctified, presented in splendor, and be holy and without blemish. How does the love of Christ for you and His church lead you to praise Him? Husbands, how does this passage lead you to prayer and praise as you consider the work of the Spirit regarding your headship?

*"The apostle began with one couplet 'love' and 'submission'. He ends with another 'love' and 'respect'. We have seen that the love he has in mind for the husband sacrifices and serves with a view to enabling his wife to become what God intends her to be. So the 'submission' and 'respect' he asks of the wife express her response to his love and her desire that he too will become what God intends him to be in his 'leadership'."*

*-John Stott*